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# UNDERMINING THE TRADITIONAL USAGE OF THE SYNECDOCHE OF THE NOSE IN SALMAN RUSHDIE'S NOVEL *MIDNIGHT'S CHILDREN*

## Anotacija

Straipsnyje analizuojama sinekdochės *nosis* tradicinių reikšmių transformacija Salmano Rushdie romane „Vidurnakčio vaikai“. Kūrinio interpretacijos teoriniu pagrindu pasirinkta Rolando Bartheso pasiūlyta žaismo strategija, kuri suponuoja, kad postmodernus tekstas yra kuriamas pagal tradicinius struktūros kanonus, tačiau atsisakant tradicinės hierarchinės struktūros, kurioje kūrinio elementai yra skirstomi į pagrindinius ir antrinius. Straipsnyje pateikiama romano „Vidurnakčio vaikai“ interpretacija analizuoja įvaizdžių kūrimo mechanizmą, kuris leidžia konkrečiam teksto elementui priskirti neribotą reikšmių skaičių. Konceptai, priskiriami konkrečiam teksto prasminiam elementui, nėra sietini trapusavyje bendrų reikšmių ar vienos pagrindinės prasmės.

PAGRINDINIAI ŽODŽIAI: postmodernizmas, transformacija, tradicinis, reikšmė, Salmanas Rushdie, žaismas, Rolandas Barthesas, sinekdochė.

## Abstract

The article analyses the subversion of the traditional usage of the synecdoche of the nose in Salman Rushdie's novel *Midnight's Children*. The strategy of the play as proposed by Roland Barthes has been chosen for the interpretation of the synecdoche. Barthes suggests a

postmodern interpretation of the *play*, highlighting the importance of the decentering of a postmodern text which determines the perception of the text in terms of the significations attributed to its elements. As a result of decentering, signs which compose a postmodern text are supposedly attributed an infinite number of meanings which do not necessarily correlate.

KEY WORDS: postmodernism, subversion, traditional, meaning, Salman Rushdie, play, Roland Barthes, synecdoche.

The article analyses the subversion of the traditional usage of the synecdoche of the nose in Salman Rushdie's novel *Midnight's Children*. Synecdoche is the central means of rhetoric used in the novel. The indeterminacy of the interpretation of the synecdoche could be explained by the postmodern nature of the novel where chance and instability are favoured over order and hierarchy. The very idea of a strict synecdoche, which is a figure of speech where a part stands for a whole, a whole for a part, an individual for a class or a material for a thing, implies a striving for order, hierarchy and subjugation. Postmodernism aims to subvert and undermine similar strong impositions of order. The analysis of the novel will be focused on highlighting how the principle symbol in the novel the nose acquires a variety of connotations because of the subversion of its traditional meanings.

The analysis will be carried out with the view to the concept of play as a strategy of writing and reading of a text. Although the strategy is not a postmodern invention, Roland Barthes highlights a set of features that distinguish a postmodern form of play. Firstly, he points out that a postmodern text lacks a hierarchical structure, which enables the writer or the reader to construct/interpret the text in an infinite variety of ways. Secondly, Barthes notes that although a postmodern text has no centre, it still has a framework which holds the elements of the text together; a close reading of such a text reveals that the system of the text is perceptible and comprehensible. (Barthes 1982, 31–33)

Discussing the role of the play in a postmodern text, Roland Barthes uses the term *bricolage* to identify the method which a postmodern writer employs to create a literary work. *Bricolage* is the term which Jacques Derrida introduces in the postmodern theory to describe the improvisation of a creator or a *bricoleur* who produces something new and unexpected using the means close at hand. (Derrida 2007, 360) The reader, while

using the well-known traditional interpretations of the images prevalent in the novel, will have his expectations subverted. The undermining of the connotations of the images which emerge from different traditions, mainly European and Indian, creates a unique blend of new meanings that a particular image puts forward.

Since the system of images in the novel is highly complicated, the focus of the further research will be centred round the synecdoche of the nose. The usage of this synecdoche repeats in the novel, and it is attributed to its central characters. What is more, the synecdoche of the nose acquires a variety of connotations throughout the novel through the connections with other constituent parts of the novel. The image will be analysed in respect to the means which is used to compose it as well its multiple connotations prevalent in the novel.

The central figure of the mythic world of the novel *Midnight's Children* is the elephant-headed god Ganesh. He is related to the protagonists of the novel Saleem and his grandfather Aadam Aziz through the synecdoche of the nose, a reference to Ganesh's trunk. Traditionally, Ganesh's trunk is attributed a connotation of a link between the divine and the worldly. At the initial stage of the novel this particular signification is associated with the nose in respect to Aadam Aziz. The boatman Tai makes a comment about the importance of Aadam Aziz's nose: "Tai tapped his left nostril. 'You know what this is nakkoo? It's the place where the outside world meets the world inside you. If they don't get on, you feel it here.'" (Rushdie 2006, 15)

In respect to the portrayal of Aadam Aziz, this connotation is preserved throughout the novel; however, regarding Saleem, the synecdoche of the nose as a trunk acquires contradictory connotations. In the novel, Saleem – Ganesh is closely related to two other deities of the Hindi pantheon: Shiva and Parvati. In contrast to the traditional interpretation of the hierarchy within the pantheon where Shiva and Parvati function as senior gods in relation to Ganesh, in the novel both of them become secondary characters and peers to Saleem.

This alteration of the traditional hierarchy is recognised and justified in the novel. Shiva has a set of features which are supposed to distinguish him as a potential protagonist, including his position in the family saga that the novel is centred around and personal qualities. In contrast to Sal-

eem, Shiva is the real grandson of Aadam Aziz who has been denied his birthright by accident. What is more, he possesses such personal features that are typically attributed to protagonists of literary works: he is determined, goal-oriented, physically strong as well as sexually potent. Regarding his goals, Shiva is an achiever; he turns out to be on the winning side during a series of conflicts depicted in the novel.

However, these features which characterise Shiva as a natural protagonist eliminate him from becoming one, for in *Midnight's Children* accident and play are favoured over stability and predicability. Consequently, Saleem who becomes a member of a privileged family by accident, who is not capable of reaching his goals, whose faith is determined by chance and accident becomes the central figure of the novel.

In contrast to Shiva whose portrayal in the novel incorporates the features that are traditionally attributed to him, Parvati does not represent the lure of worldly attractions as she does in the traditional interpretation. Her intentions to become a mother and a wife as well as the means of fulfilling these intentions by the use of female sexuality are similar to those of the Hindu deity. However, the temporality of her achievements and incapability of preserving her gains reduce her significance in the novel. Furthermore, differently from her traditionally implied role as the mother of Ganesh, in *Midnight's Children* Parvati aspires to be Saleem's lover rather than his mentor or teacher. Thus, Rushdie reverses the roles of Hindu deities by promoting Ganesh to the central position while demoting Shiva and Parvati to secondary roles.

Saleem's connection to Hinduism through the figure of Ganesh is not a stable one. With the development of the novel, there is another religious figure to whom he is related – Buddha. The transformation of Ganesh into Buddha implies undermining the traditional interpretations of both deities who though are a part of the same cultural background, belong to different religious traditions.

Another fact which is significant for understanding the process of play employed in the novel is the location of Saleem's transformation from Ganesh to Buddha; it is Pakistan. The location is important in this context, for the dominant religion in Pakistan is Islam, which has an effect on the people's attitude towards the transformation Saleem undergoes.

The strange culture creates the atmosphere of ambiguity around the image of Saleem – Buddha. Firstly, in terms of the causes of the transformation, Saleem achieves the freedom from any human feelings due to the treason of his sister. Another factor which emphasises the ambiguity of his state is the attitude espoused by the people who surround him: although he is respected for his exceptional ability to smell anything in the world, his isolation from the rest of the soldiers is considered to be a sign of ill mental health. Ironically, Saleem is indirectly linked to the Indian culture through the comparison of his state to that of a vegetable, while his fellow Pakistani soldiers use the same word to refer to their Indian enemies.

Overall, the theme of the connection between the worldly and the divine through the reference to the synecdoche of the nose reveals the process of undermining the traditional connotations attributed to the image of the nose – trunk. If the portrayal of Aadam Aziz which introduces the theme incorporates a traditional interpretation of the image, the depiction of Saleem enables the subversion of the traditional connotations drawing on the play with varied discourses – political, religious and cultural.

Another group of connotations attributed to the synecdoche of the nose are the ones referring to the image of the nose – radio receiver. Initially, Saleem's portrayal is related to technology:

here was a jumbo-sized baby-snap with its prophetic captions, and here, beside it,

a letter on high-quality vellum, embossed with the seal of state – the lions of Sanarth stood above the dharma-chakra on the Prime Minister's missive, which arrived, via Vishwanath the post-boy, one week after my photograph appeared on the front page of the *Times of India*. (ibid, 167)

The excerpt mentions numerous technologies determining the destiny of the baby Saleem: photography, newspapers, postal services – all of them are prophets of Saleem's future. However, the one which dominates its portrayal – the radio – escapes being observed at such an early stage.

The image of the nose – radio receiver appears later in the novel highlighting the relevance of blending of natural and man-made elements in terms of its constituents. Saleem's natural talent to be able to hear people's thoughts is enhanced by his learnt ability to manipulate this talent, which is depicted through an analogy between his nose and a radio receiver:

By sunrise, I had discovered that the voice could be controlled – I was a radio receiver –

er, and could turn the volume down or up; I could select individual voices; I could

even, by an effort of will, switch off my newly-discovered inner ear. It was astonishing how soon fear left me; by morning, I was thinking, 'Man, this is better than All-India Radio, man; better than Radio Ceylon. (ibid, 226)

The approach Saleem adopts towards the discovered ability is generated by the media in terms of the goals he sets for himself and the phrasing that he employs to express his goals. Using his ability, Saleem founds Midnight's Children's Conference which is described using media clichés: "sort of loose federation of equals, all points of view given free expression." (ibid, 305) However, the failure of the conference to deliver its objectives uncovers the dangers of blending of elements different in their nature.

Similarly, a blend of natural and technology-related elements used to depict Saleem's sister Jamilia uncovers the vulnerability underlying such a fusion. In the portrayal of Jamilia's career as a singer, she acquires the features which are not characteristic of her as a person but are imposed on her as a persona brought to the world and supported by the media:

[her] voice was on Voice-Of-Pakistan Radio constantly, so that in the villages of West and East Wings she came to seem like a superhuman being, incapable of being fatigued, an angel who sang to her people through all the days and nights.

(ibid, 436)

The image of a national heroine irreversibly transforms Jamilia's personality. Suppressing the features which used to be defining of her nature such as rebelliousness and sternness, she allows the qualities, attributed to her by public opinion, to dominate. Finally, she vanishes as a human being and continues existing as a mere voice representing the media position: "the voice of Jamilia Singer sang Pakistani troops to their deaths", "the voice of Jamilia Singer fought anonymous voices singing the lyrics of R. Tagore". Along with the elimination of her personality, the name is replaced: instead of the Brass Monkey she obtains a new name Jamilia Singer, which is retained throughout the rest of the novel.

The transformation which Jamilia undergoes might serve as an example of the formation of a simulacrum. The process reveals the stages

which Jean Baudrillard presents while delineating his theory of simulacrum. (Baudrillard 1983) The reflection of the basic reality is exemplified by the initial stage of Jamilia's singing career, when she retains her name and physical appearance, for she only sings for her family members. The second stage which is characterised by masking and perversion of the basic reality coincides with the beginning of her career as a public performer when Jamilia is hidden under a burqa. The formation of her public image represents the third stage of the simulacrum. Jamilia's image acquires the features which are not related to her personality (she is said to have been injured in a car accident, which has led to permanent injuries, and she has to cover her face, as a result), but these new features have a stronger impact on the audience than the facts of her life. The final stage, when Jamilia's personality is dissolved in her public image, marks the final transformation of her image into a pure simulacrum which bears no resemblance to any reality.

In general, the blending of natural and man-made elements to create an identity produces ambiguity and causes failure. Both Saleem and Jamilia employ artificially created elements to enhance their natural talents and achieve their goals. However, the outcome of these attempts reveals the vulnerability of such a strategy, for in Saleem's case, he fails to reach his target, while Jamilia is subjected to a radical transformation of her identity.

The final connotation traditionally attributed to the synecdoche of the nose used in the novel is that of a male sexual organ. This connotation is revealed in the portrayal of Aadam Aziz and Saleem Sinai.

In respect to Aadam Aziz, two interpretations of sexuality are introduced: reproduction and pleasure. Regarding reproduction, Tai, the boatman, predicts: "That's the nose to start a family on, my princeling." (ibid, 9) His prediction comes true as Aadam Aziz becomes a father of five children. Moreover, a frequent reference to Aadam Aziz as a patriarch is also justified, for his influence on the family is not limited to mere reproduction: each child is affected by different qualities of the father. His rebellious nature is mirrored in Mumtaz's stance against an angry Muslim mob ready to tear apart a Hindu street-seller, in Emerald's fleeing to major Zulfikar without her dupatta and consequently without any shame, in Hanif's realistic film scripts which ruin his career and end in his suicide, as well as a number of other instances.

Regarding physical pleasure, Aadam Aziz faces a failure as he is unable to convince his Muslim wife that sexual intercourse might be related to pleasure. She blames his views on the years of his education spent in Europe and flatly refuses to compromise her position. This clash, as the narrator points out,

set the tone for their marriage, which rapidly developed into a place of frequent and  
devastating warfare under whose depredations the young girl behind the sheet  
and the gauche young Doctor turned rapidly into different, stranger beings.  
(ibid, 38)

The estrangement between the wife and the husband acquires multiple forms in the novel: starting with minor complaints concerning education, social activity, and finishing with battles which result in starvation periods, leading to exhaustion or months of silence.

Saleem Sinai is the character closest in his views and destiny to Aadam Aziz; he is also the character whose personality is dominated by the qualities attributed to the synecdoche of the nose. In a way, he inherits Aadam Aziz's characteristics; however, his destiny to be raised in a family which is not his by birthright has an affect on Aadam Aziz's inheritance. The connotations which are introduced in his portrayal undergo major alterations if compared to those attributed to Aadam Aziz, although the key link to the concept of sexuality is retained.

However, the traditional connotation of the image is subverted in the portrayal of Saleem Sinai. In contrast to Aadam Aziz, Saleem is physically impotent. This fact is constantly emphasised in the novel. In the first book, Saleem contemplates his relationships with Padma and bitterly admits:

And Padma is a generous woman, because she stays by me in these last days, although I can't do much for her. That's right... I am unmanned. Despite Padma's many and varied gifts and ministrations, I can't leak into her, not even when she puts her left

foot on my right, winds her right leg around my waist, inclines her head up toward

mine and makes cooing noises; not even when she whispers in my ear, 'So now that

the writery is done, let's see if we can make your other pencil work!' (ibid, 45)



Saleem's impotence threatens their relationships, and at some point Padma temporarily leaves the factory without any explanation. From Saleem's point of view, this might have been caused by her distress over his impotence.

The reference which Padma makes to "a pencil" is not accidental: having lost his sexual potency after castration, Saleem replaces it with writing. Therefore, another explanation he comes up with regarding Padma's disappearance is her jealousy of his writing: "Is it possible to be jealous of written words? To resent nocturnal scribbles as though they were flesh and blood of a sexual rival?" (ibid, 165) The question which remains unanswered in the novel introduces the problem of the supplement, elaborated within the theoretical framework of postmodernism by Jacques Derrida.

Theoretically, Barbara Johnson explicates the term supplement, pointing out its ambiguous nature. She proposes that analysing the phenomenon of the supplement with the view to the concept of a binary opposition, the concept of the supplement introduces a different approach, implying that "instead of A is opposed to B, we have B is both added to A and replaces A. A and B are no longer opposed, nor are they equivalent." (Derrida 2004, xiii)

In *Midnight's Children*, Saleem's writing functions as a supplement for his lost sexual potency. Both Padma and Saleem suspect the connection between the two: Padma reveals her approach by comparison of the writing and the act of making love; Saleem, on the other hand, questions the grounds of their conflict speculating about a possibility of Padma's jealousy because of his writings. However, the supplement does not substitute/replace the loss of sexual potency. Writing does not stop the process of Saleem's disintegration caused by his castration; it enables a process of a temporary compensation which appears to be significant, for Saleem does not abandon writing under any circumstances.

The period of Saleem's impotence coincides with his maturity. However, the description of his childhood contains references to other significations related to sexuality: self-awareness, sin, physicality. Saleem spends his adolescence in Karachi where his nasal qualities acquire the sharpness they have never displayed before. Estranging himself from the family, Saleem surrenders to the world of senses and his experiences form his personality:

So, from the earliest days of my Pakistani adolescence, I began to learn the secret

aromas of the world, the heady but quick-fading perfume of new love, and also the

deeper, longer-lasting pungency of hate... Having realised the crucial nature of morality, having sniffed out that smells could be sacred or profane, I invented, in isolation of my scooter-trips, the science of nasal ethics. Sacred: purdah-veils, halal meat, muezzin's towers, prayer mats; profane: Western records, pig-meat, alcohol. (Rushdie 2006, 427–442)

The quest for self-awareness is completed when Saleem visits a whore. The name of the whore Tai Bibi refers to the name of the boatman Tai who prophesied the future of Aadam Aziz. Similarly to the boatman, the powers of Tai Bibi rest in the knowledge of the world and people. She provides Saleem an opportunity to explore the secrets of his own sub-consciousness. When the initial embarrassment is conquered with the help of the whore, Saleem plunges into the world of the forbidden which opens the doors for his acknowledgment of a true love.

The period of Saleem's maturity coincides with a complete absence of emotions, an increased sharpness of smell and a height of his sexual potency. Rejected by his true love, Saleem is devoid of any feelings, turning into a man-dog serving in the army. The only female in the unit, a latrine cleaner, rejects the advances of all the soldiers in the unit for the benefit of Saleem-dog due to his immense sexuality. Saleem participates in the intercourse with her purely physically, having no emotional bond with the girl.

In general, the synecdoche of the nose is attributed multiple connotations related to the concept of sexuality. The owners of two distinguished noses, Aadam Aziz and Saleem Sinai, are related to the concept. While Aadam Aziz is associated with relatively stable significations which include patriarchy/sexual potency and physical pleasure; the connotations revealed in the portrayal of Saleem undergo major transformations and subversion. The period of Saleem's adolescence is dominated by sensuality as a means of the increase of self-awareness and recognition of the outside world. Different experiences, guided by his hypersensitive nose, enrich him with the feelings of lust and sin. The height of his sexual potency coincides with the elimination of emotions. The final years of Saleem's life when emotions and feelings are recovered are dominated

by his impotence. Saleem partially supplements the absence of his sexual potency with the process of writing. However, the supplementation is not complete, for the disintegration of his personality inflicted by castration appears to be irreversible.

To summarise, Salman Rushdie draws on numerous sources in terms of the imagery of the novel, including religions such as Buddhism and Hinduism, postmodern media, culture. The writer employs the images which are easily recognisable to produce a stronger impact by subverting the connotations which are traditionally attributed to them. The subversion produces an effect of confusion and ambiguity on the reader.

The role of contemporary media in the perception of images is emphasised through frequent references to media-related elements to describe the image of the nose. The function of the mediator between the outer world and the inner world of the characters, which is attributed to the synecdoche, is relatable to the connotation of a religious image of the Hindi god Ganesh. However, the subversion of the connotation through the reference to a mass medium, the radio, brings about the connotations of artificiality, trivia and death.

The novel includes a number of religious figures such as Shiva, Parvati and Ganesh, whose significations are subverted and undermined. Shiva who is traditionally regarded as an embodiment of power and supremacy over other Hindi deities is assigned a secondary role in the novel where indeterminacy and instability are favoured over dominance and determination. The traditional role of a teacher which is assigned to Buddha is undermined through the change of the cultural context in which the Buddha of the novel appears. The Buddhist culture is replaced with the Islamic one which results in the undermining of Buddha's role. The subversion which the connotations of the image undergo in the novel could be interpreted as due to the problem of the proper name in postmodernism, discussed in Jacques Derrida's works. The proper name is supposed to refer to a person; however, it refers to a certain public image which is vulnerable to subversion and undermining.

The connotations of sexuality are analysed with the view to the synecdoche of the nose, which is related to the main characters of the novel Aadam Aziz and Saleem Sinai. The significations attributed to the synecdoche undergo gradual subversion in respect to these characters. The

portrayal of Aadam Aziz incorporates the connotations which are partially undermined in respect to their traditional variations. The nose of Aadam Aziz is associated with sexual potency, for he becomes a patriarch of a big family. Despite his potency, Aadam Aziz is incapable of reaching harmony in his sexual and family life.

In contrast, Saleem Sinai is portrayed as sexually impotent in spite of the possession of a huge nose. Even though in his adolescence he is guided by his nose through the process of self-awareness, Saleem's maturity is related to the undermined connotation of the nose. An impossible love transforms Saleem into an impotent, although is supposed to have been complemented with sexuality. The supplement for the lost sexual potency, writing, appears to be incapable of substituting the loss; instead, it leads to Saleem's final disintegration.

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# TRADICINIŲ SINEKDOCHĖS NOSIS REIKŠMIŲ TRANSFORMACIJOS SALMANO RUSHDIE ROMANE „VIDURNAKČIO VAIKAI“

## Santrauka

Romano „Vidurnakčio vaikai“ literatūrinis pasaulis yra kuriamas, naudojant įvaizdžius iš įvairių pasaulio religijų, tokių kaip budizmas, islamas ir hinduizmas, romane yra nuorodų į šiuolaikinių medijų sukurtus įvaizdžius. Nors įvaizdžiai yra lengvai atpažįstami, jų reikšmės romane skiriasi nuo įprastų šių įvaizdžių interpretacijų. Salmanas Rushdie žaidžia su tra-

dicinėmis įvaizdžių reikšmėmis jas deformuodamas ir neigdamas, ir taip kurdamas asmeninę mitologiją. Straipsnyje analizuojamos sinekdochei *nosis* priskiriamos reikšmės ir jų transformacijos romane, teksto analizė atliekama pasitelkiant žaidimo strategiją, pasiūlytą Rolando Bartheso.

Pagrindinis romano mitinio pasaulio herojus – hinduistų dievas Ganešas, kurio dieviškasis įrankis – straublys yra sietinas su sinekdoche *nosis*, o per šį įvaizdį – su dviem pagrindiniais romano veikėjais Salemu Sinajumi bei Adamu Azizu. Kuriant Adamo Azizo portretą skaitytojai yra supažindinami su tradicine šio įvaizdžio reikšme – dieviškąja jungtimi tarp žemiškojo ir anapusinio gyvenimo. Salemo Sinajaus portretas sietinas su tradicinių reikšmių deformacija. Juo atskleidžiami postmodernūs Budos ir Ganešo įvaizdžiai: deformuojamos jiems priskiriamos savybės bei jų svarba religiniame diskurse. Ganešui skiriama didesnė reikšmė, lyginant su vyresniosiomis hinduizmo panteono dievybėmis Šiva ir Parvati. Buda vaizduojamas priešiškame kultūriniame kontekste, kur jam priskiramų savybių interpretacija yra iškreipiama.

Salemo Sinajaus portretas sietinas su medijų generuojamais įvaizdžiais: spauda ir radijas tampa svarbiais įrankiais kuriant Salemo portretą. Nosies ir radijo siųstuvo analogija atveria antrą šios sinekdochės prasmę. Salemo portreto ir su juo susijusių įvaizdžių interpretacija remiasi Jeano Baudrillardo simuliacijų teorija, kur atskleidžiamas medijų kuriamų įvaizdžių atotrūkis nuo realybės. *Nosies* įvaizdis iliustruoja šią atskirtį. Salemas naudoja savo nosį kaip radijo bangų siųstuvą, bendraudamas su Vidurnakčio vaikais. Paralelė tarp nosies ir radijo siųstuvo perkeliama ir į bendravimo plotmę: Salemas verbalizuoja Vidurnakčio vaikų konferencijos tikslus pasitelkdamas masinės informacijos priemonių naudojamas klišes, kurios sukuria netikrumo ir dirbtinumo pojūtį.

Tradiciškai sinekdochei *nosis* priskiriama seksualumo reikšmė. Romane ši reikšmė yra deformuojama ir transformuojama, romano veikėjams priskiriamos įvairios šios reikšmės interpretacijos. Didžiųjų nosių savininkų Adamo Azizo ir Salemo Sinajaus portretais atskleidžiamas įvaizdžio reikšmių įvairumas ir prieštaravimai. Reikšmės, priskiriamos Adamui Azizui, yra artimesnės tradicinei nosies įvaizdžio interpretacijai: jo portrete *nosis* asocijuojama su patriarcho vaidmeniu šeimoje, seksualine potencija ir fiziniu malonumu. Reikšmės, atskleidžiamos Salemo Sinajaus portrete, pakeičia arba neigia tradicinę interpretaciją.

Paauglystės laikotarpiu *nosies* įvaizdis siejamas su pasaulio pažinimo tema. Šiuo periodu įgyta patirtis praturtina įvaizdžio reikšmės naujais aistros ir nuodėmės atspalviais. Seksualinės Salemo brandos laikotarpiu dominuoja fizinio kontakto tema bei emocinės reakcijos neigimas. Jausmų susigražinimo etapas sutampa su seksualinės potencijos sumažėjimu, o vėliau ir praradimu. Salemo rašymas iš dalies kompensuoja seksualumo praradimą, tačiau tapdamas papildymu rašymas netampa ekvivalentu, todėl asmenybės griovimo procesas, kuris prasidėjo Salemo kastracija, nesustabdomas.

Tradicinių reikšmių transformacija ir neigimas būdingi postmoderniam tekstui. Nauja rašymo forma, susiformavusi ant opozicijos tradicinėms rašymo formoms ir įvaizdžių reikšmėms ir naujo postmoderniojo pasaulio suvokimo pamatų, remiasi paradoksu, kuris konstruojamas pasitelkiant žaidimo strategiją.